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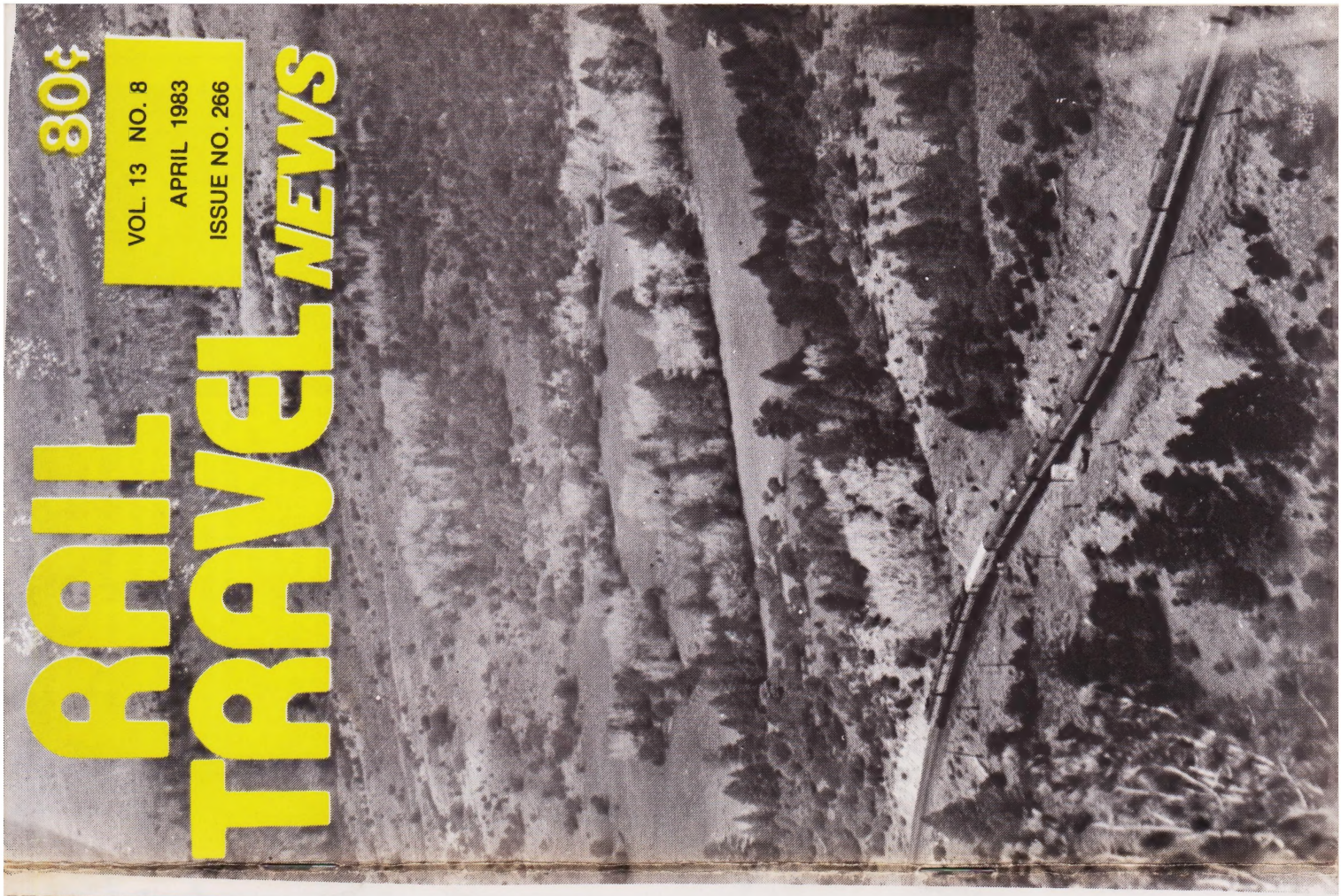

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Amtrak's Chicago-San Francisco train, the newly renamed California Zephyr, which was scheduled to inaugurate service over the Denver and Rio Grande Western Railroad between Denver/Salt Lake City on April 25, will temporarily detour over its former route through southern Wyoming. Massive earth slides brought on by heavy precipitation in eastern Utah have blocked the Rio Grande's right of way in the area of the Spanish Fork River. In order to adhere to our newly published schedule, the California Zephyr will depart Denver at 10:45 a.m. westbound and 9:20 p.m. eastbound.

Amtrak apoligizes for any inconvenience and would like to help make your stay in Denver an enjoyable experience.

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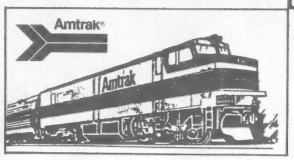

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ON THE COVER

On its last run, on Apr 24, 1983, the westbound RIO GRANDE ZEPHYR was photographed gliding thru a scenic canyon area just west of Gore Canyon, between Kremmling and Bond, Colorado. The train was still running the 6-dome consist that we reported on last issue. Photo by Paul Rayton.

(Rear cover:) A portion of a flyer handed out on Amtrak's CALIFORNIA ZEPHYR since Apr 24, describing and apologizing for the re-routing thru southern Wyoming and the long layover in Denver. The flyer goes on to list seven restaurants in Denver within a six-block radius of the train station. It also recommends a Gray Line city tour. Note the misspelling in "apoligizes."

LETTERS

The proposed Bullet Train between L.A. and San Diego is in my judgment a big mistake. Let me explain it.

First, I have serious doubts about the feasibility study. The expected ridership figure is too optimistic. Americans are so deeply in love with their own cars that they will never give up the convenience of driving their own cars...

Second problem is the cost. Engineers of the Japanese National Railways (JNR) like to build a lot of tunnels which boost up the total cost of construction greatly. They say that is due to avoid landslides and steep gradings. But this is criticized even in Japan. French TGVs do go on steep gradings without slipping. Considering the depreciation of the two new Shinkansens, Tohoku line is said to be in red ink for 15 to 20 years, and the Joetsu line for over 20 years. I don't think the proposed bullet line will do a better job that the Joetsu line. If one takes the high interest rate and the high cost of construction in Southern California of these days, one would be afraid the line would never be depreciated and out of the red ink. So the construction beginning should be deferred at least to the end of the Olympic Game in the next year.

Third, Japanese Shinkansen is less productive than the French TGV. The construction cost of TGV is lower due to fewer tunnels. Besides, TGV goes stably at a higher speed. TGV equipment cost is lower because they have engines unlike the distributed traction system Shinkansen uses. This means lower maintenance cost, too. Really, TGV surpasses Shinkansen in speed, productivity and cost effectiveness.

Fourth, the Shinkansen poses serious environmental problems. Actually, some residents near Shinkansen tracks sue JNR for the noise, vibration and electric wave distortion caused by the Shinkansen. The main reason why the two new Shinkansens couldn't come into the city limit of Tokyo is that the people along the proposed line and the Tokyo Metropolitan Government were against the high speed operation within the city limit of Tokyo. Off course JNR technicians and engineers try to correct those disadvantages, but the remedy cost is very high.

Fifth, once the Bullet line goes into operation, the existing type of operation won't be compatible with the new line as Amtrak hopes. The first Shinkansen line which is Tokaido line did depreciate in 6 years, because it had a very large volume of traffic. But at the same time the conventional line went in red ink. The second Shinkansen line, which is Sanyo line, the westward extension of the first one, takes some more years to depreciate the startup cost. And the conventional line went in big red ink, again, and JNR says the conventional line will continue to lose money more than the Shinkansen earns after its depreciation. The case of the third one, Tohoku line, and the fourth one, Joetsu line, are much worse. Especially the latter, which was built under the instructions of two former prime ministers, Tanaka and Fukuda, is miserable. Because these politicians put a

heavy burden on the Japanese taxpayers for the benefit of their constituencies. The corporate mismanagement of JNR is to be blamed for the red ink of these conventional lines too. But it seems to me that the Amtrak's corporate mismanagement is no better than that of JNR. I don't think Amtrak can benefit from the construction of the Bullet line.

Some readers of RTN suggest that 90-minute schedule is possible between L.A. and San Diego if they build some small tunnels. This solution seems to be the best. It is nothing but ridiculous to take 2hr, 45mins for the run of 127 miles. First this situation should be changed. If the 90-min schedule turns out to be a success, they can put more trains by upgrading the tracks and double-tracking, which will lead to even faster schedules. And the Bullet Trains should be frozen. If they have already acquired land for the right-of-way, the land should be preserved for the future use. When they have an overflow of passengers on trains, and cannot accommodate them anymore, then they can build MAGLEV line on the right-of-way. At that time the MAGLEV system will be fully developed for the commercial use both in Japan and West Germany. And that should connect the two cities in 30 minutes.

Noliyuky Nacano
Tokyo, Japan

My wife and I have just returned from riding the first Amtrak train that was supposed to go via the D&RGW route. When we got home last night I read your story of the trip to Denver and return (RTN 265) and there were parts of it that rang so true I read them out loud to my wife. She had gotten the shower button, too, in our deluxe bedroom and we had been unable to stay in the Sightseer lounge because of the smoke. Our trip was late both ways, too. The going portion partly because of high water in the Great Salt Lake and mostly due to signal problems just south of Borie, involving a northbound freight. Lots of Rio Grande traffic added to the usual UP heavy traffic made the Wyoming line very busy. Going back to California, the culprit was mostly waiting for the connecting bus at Ogden and then a delay west of Sacramento because of high water washing at an embankment along the Yolo bypass.

Bob McVay
King City, California

RIO GRANDE BEGINS TUNNEL CONSTRUCTION; CALIFORNIA ZEPHYR RUNS THRU WYOMING

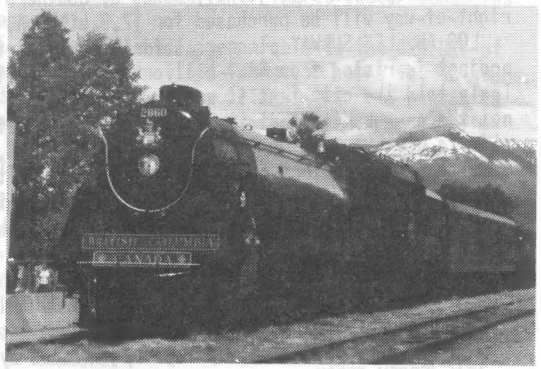
The D&RGW's RIO GRANDE ZEPHYR made its last run on Apr 24, from Denver to Grand Junction. There was extensive coverage of the last days of the train in the media. On Apr 25 the railroad began digging a 3400-foot tunnel thru Billy's Mountain just east of the large lake created by the mudslide that dammed up the Spanish Fork River at Thistle, Utah, blocking the Denver-Salt Lake City mainline of the D&RGW. The railroad's latest estimate on a date for reopening the line is July 1. Meanwhile, the newly-renamed Amtrak CALIFORNIA ZEPHYR will continue to run on its former route thru southern Wyoming. It had been scheduled to begin using the D&RGW route on Apr 25. Because of the faster running time thru Wyoming and the longer schedule adopted on Apr 24, Amtrak will hold trains 5 and 6 for 2-3 hours at Denver and at Ogden to fill out the current schedule. Amtrak bus service will operate to Glenwood Springs, Rifle, Grand Junction, Thompson, Green River (UT) and Provo. Stations on the Wyoming detour route are no longer staffed (including Greeley CO), and passengers have been advised that they can buy tickets in Wyoming only on the train, and only by cash in the exact amount. In an April 20 announcement, Amtrak said that reservations for the Wyoming segment are being accepted only thru May 15 (this time limit will probably be extended later). Westbound station stops on the DESERT WIND may be up to an hour behind published schedule times as a result of the detour, Amtrak said. Wyoming officials are still trying to force a return of train service to their state, but they are not holding out much hope for doing so.

RAIL CANADA

GREATER WINNIPEG WATER DISTRICT'S passenger runs are dead, writes David Osborne, contradicting our report of last issue. He sees no chance of revival. The last passenger operation will be chartered trains for the National Modeal Railroad Association in July. Those trips are being operated only because arrangements for the chartered trips were completed four years ago.

WINNIPEG-SASKATOON TRAINS are now two-car trains, consisting of a baggage car and a 3200-series cafe-coach pulled by an ex-CN FP-9 diesel.

ONLY DINING CARS in operation on VIA this spring are on the CANADIAN and the OCEAN. Trains 7 & 8 (Winnipeg-Capreol) have no diner, but meal service is provided by a cafe-lounge car similar to operations on the Churchill and Prince Rupert trains.



THE ROYAL HUDSON steam train excursions will run again this year on the British Columbia Railway, from May 20 to Sep 5, with operations scheduled on Wednesdays thru Sundays, five days per week. B.C. officials said that altho the train ran a deficit of $735,000 in 1982, it is deemed an important contributor to B.C. tourism and will be continued this year. The province must spend $300,000 on safety modifications to the cars this year, as well as build a new storage facility for the train. A boat-train tour package is being considered this year; when offered as an experiment last year, the package deal increased train patronage 34%. The photo above is of the first run of the 1982 season. Photo by Gene Hines.

THE PRINCESS MARGUERITE mini-cruise ship between Victoria and Seattle begins its daily runs Apr 23, operating thru Oct 6. The ship leaves Seattle at 8am and leaves Victoria for the return at 5:30pm. Regular one-way fare is $18 U.S.

LRC TRAIN REPAIRS are done at a VIA Rail shop at Ville St-Pierre, a suburb of Montreal. The shop employs 150 people, only seven of them being VIA employees. The remainder are CN-provided craftsmen. Canadian rail supporters are wondering why VIA can't hire its own staff there. The opportunity for CN to overcharge VIA for the maintenance work may be just too great. The Toronto Globe & Mail on Apr 11 reported that VIA may decide to build more LRC maintenance shops later, "depending on the future of its maintenance contracts with the two major railways." This last cryptic statement also has rail supporters wondering what this could mean.

BRITISH COLUMBIA RAILWAY, inspite of the hard economic climate, rang up a record profit of $18.6 million in 1982. (Profit in 1981 was $3.16 million.)

VIA RAIL CANADA has a new chairman--Mr. Harold Renouf, replacing Pierre Franche. Rail observers view the succession as one which will prevent VIA from acting out of lockstep with Federal dogma. Renouf was formerly chairman of the Petroleum Monitoring Agency and a board member of CN Rail.

MONTREAL-SENNETIERE PASSENGERS will have better VIA service, with less crowding, thanks to a complaint by Transport 2000 Canada to the CTC. VIA has agreed to a later Friday night departure from Montreal and an earlier Sunday afternoon Sennetiere departure. Trains will carry 2 baggage cars, 3-5 coaches, 44-seat cage-bar car, and a sleeper.

URBAN-SUBURBAN TRANSIT

NORTHEAST CORRIDOR TRANSIT GUIDE is now available. It gives detailed information on public transit for 12 cities in the NEC. It can be obtained for $2 by writing to NARP, 417 New Jersey Avenue, S.E., Washington DC 20003. It can be had for $1 at some Amtrak stations, or from the NARP office in person.

VALPARAISO COMMUTER RUNS could lose one daily roundtrip soon, as Congress will permit Amtrak to economize on 403-d, "sunset commuter trains".

PORTLAND, OREGON LIGHT RAIL system work was beginning in April, after the Tri-Met system finally resolved two legal problems that were holding things up. One of the problems was approval of an agreement to buy four miles of trackage from Portland Traction Co., jointly owned by Southern Pacific and Union Pacific. The right-of-way will be purchased for $2.9 million.

LOS ANGELES SUBWAY planners said in early April that the projected cost of the project is rising from $2.1 billion to $3.1 billion. On Apr 27 UMTA head Arthur Teele told the city that it would need to put up half the cost of the project, not the one-quarter that it hoped for. Teele said the Feds could not force the city to pay 50%, as the legal requirement is 25%, but with more local monetary commitment the project would "have higher priority", he indicated. Houston has already agreed to pay half of its costs, and it is in competition with L.A. for a chunk of the $1.1 billion that UMTA has available annually for transit system construction.

GULF TRANSPORT BUS COMPANY, a subsidiary of the Illinois Central Gulf Railroad and IC Industries, has been sold effective June 1 to Trans National, Inc.

SOUTH SHORE LINE in Chicago area will have its last eight 60-year old electric interurban cars phased out by August, replaced by new Japanese-build vehicles.

NEW JERSEY FERRY service was making a comeback in April, spurred on by New Jersey commuter strikes. A 250-passenger vessel was to operate from Pier 62 in New York and cross the Hudson to Weehawken NJ. Service has been defunct since the late 1950s, when the Hoboken and Weehawken ferries shut down.

BURLINGTON NORTHERN COMMUTER car in Chicago derailed on Apr 19 near 21st and Kedzie after it hit a freight car door that had fallen on the tracks moments before. Eleven people, including the engineer and fireman, were injured, with one elderly woman in "fair" condition. The BN train was a double-decker, the #254 from Aurora. The accident occurred at 4:08pm.

THE SEPTA SYSTEM began a week-long track work project in mid-April, at the 40th & Woodland entrance to the subway tunnel in Philadelphia. Streetcar lines were diverted to 40th and Market during that time.

MARYLAND'S BUS SYSTEM announced on Mar 30 a forthcoming 15¢ bus fare increase. The Baltimore Sun ran a furious editorial the next day. The paper called on the General Assembly to change its rule that requires the MTA to gain half of its revenues from the farebox. The paper chided the rural members of the legislature "who have no grasp or interest in the real problems of city life" as well as the city-dwelling members "who seldom ride a bus."

REVIVED OKLAHOMA SERVICE will be studied by Amtrak, the rail corporation promised in late April. Amtrak's study is to be completed by the end of summer, and will focus on a revived LONE STAR or spur of the SOUTHWEST LIMITED running from Wichita thru Oklahoma City to Dallas.

MOBILE-NEW ORLEANS rail passenger study has been completed by Amtrak. NARP criticized the study has coming up with an unfairly inflated figure--$2.273 million in total capital costs to start the route up. Operating costs were estimated as $1.6 million per year. Running time between Mobile and New Orleans was set at 3hrs, 55mins.

GETTING THE SCOOP: NARP BOARD MEMBERS ARE BRIEFED BY AMTRAK EXECUTIVES

The Board of Directors of the National Association of Railroad Passengers met in Washington DC Apr 22-23, and on the 21st the Board had an opportunity to meet with Amtrak President Graham Claytor at Amtrak headquarters.

The meeting with Claytor was limited by his schedule, and was largely a presentation by him, with only limited opportunities for questions.

UPBEAT REMARKS: Claytor said that on-time performance continues to rise, and that railroads are now accustomed to good on-time performance. He likes the incentive contracts, and will expand with new contracts. Amtrak will be working to improve schedules (listeners got the impression that he was referring to faster schedules but not necessarily more convenient ones).

THE LAKE SHORE: The LAKE SHORE with new times is comparable to the CENTURY of old, Claytor said, considering the intermediate stops--about 18 hours vs. 16 hours. This is about as good as can be done, and it merits considering a name change to the CENTURY. On another speed topic, Claytor indicated that Amtrak desperately wants to do something about slow Western trains (with a reference to SP) and their "unconscionably slow" scheduling. Claytor said he intends to improve things.

FOOD: The menu items are pretty good now. On-Board Services organization is to be completely reorganized, with a new Train Manager system. Unlike the older Train Manager system, The new one will be a route manager concept rather than for individual runs. The manager would be located at one terminal and would have full responsibility over all on-board services. He expects to put the system into place gradually over the next six months. From his remarks, Claytor seems to want responsibility to follow a chain of command.

Graham Claytor. Amtrak News photo.

BUDGET STABILITY: There is a good outlook, with Amtrak and the DOT using the same budget for the first time, with differences due only to assumptions about legislative changes and their impact. At least they agree on the needs and basics of the operation of the system. The dollar difference reflects only legislative "ifs." Claytor said he is dedicated to improving Amtrak service and decreasing the costs.

FARES: Fares will be set to improve the cost to revenue ratio and not to increase the number of riders. This is a bottom-line emphasis--the aim is efficiency rather than bare numbers. Claytor noted that there is no current effort to "chop anything" from Amtrak, and calls this a major accomplishment.

THE AUTO-FERRY: He aims for a startup with the timetable change in October. The train will start with tri-weekly service, and will expand to daily service by March, 1984. Heritage equipment will be used, including several dome cars. (Some ex-GN Big Domes are enroute to Beech Grove shops for refurbishing for the run.) The auto carriers will be a mixture of ex-Auto-Train cars and some other similar ones. They will be fully enclosed, and will operate at a maximum 70mph. Higher speeds for a long train is not in the cards, he said.

ATLANTIC CITY SERVICE: It appears to be several years away. It is only workable if the casinos agree to subsidize passengers to the same extent they subsidize bus riders. Amtrak is looking at something like five Philadelphia and one New York City roundtrip per day, using HEP cars. It will be a single-track line with three sidings and no commuter traffic.

TAMPA: Trains will terminate at Tampa (there is no compromise in Claytor's mind). He claims a $1.6 million annual savings and better service overall. The change to bus will save one trainset and one crew. An interdivisional run is not the answer because it would mean paying "overmiles" to one crew. St. Petersburg requires seven hours of extra on-board service work, or equivalent to $35 per passenger beyond Tampa. He claims rail is impractical because of geography. One-third of current Tampa loadings are St. Pete patrons who drive to Tampa, he said.

SPLIT TRAINS: The question of where to put cars in a train is an insoluble problem--where to put sleepers and coaches and still avoid extensive switching. A new approach will be tried on the Florida trains--but note that it is easier because the trains have two diners and two lounges on most trips. Elsewhere, we will have to live with mixed coaches and sleepers.

REVENUES AND RIDERS: Ridership and revenues will be up for the balance of this year. Amtrak will not cut prices just to stimulate ridership, but will cut them if additional ridership will be cost-effective.

EMPIRE CORRIDOR SPEEDS: Amtrak is opposed to raising speed limits above 90mph west of Schenectady for just a few trains.

STATION COSTS: Too much money is spent for stations on single-train routes. "I will unman all except the most important stations on routes with only one train," Claytor said. Amtrak will use contract agents, telephones, travel agents, on-train ticket sales, etc. We "can't afford these stations."

NEW ROUTES: Besides Atlantic City, there are no other firm plans for new service, but Amtrak is looking at three possibilities for the October timetable change: 1) Newton KS-Oklahoma-Fort Worth; 2) Carbondale-St. Louis; and 3) daily operation of the SUNSET and EAGLE. Equipment limitations will preclude doing all of these. A decision will be made on revenue-to-cost return, and Amtrak will try for at least one of these.

RIO GRANDE EQUIPMENT: The equipment from the D&RGW will go into storage for possible HEP conversion. Amtrak needs to evaluate each car more fully.

CONNECTIONS: Claytor said he recognizes the value of interconnections. He claims a significant percentage of transfers at Chicago (no numbers given) and said we must maintain these. He said the connections override Chicago and/or New York City scheduling in importance. Claytor: "We have all these numbers in the computer." (Another Amtrak source denied the latter statement, however.)

STOCKING DINERS & LOUNGES: Asked about why Amtrak runs out of food on trains frequently, Claytor denied any consistent problem. (A number of NARP Directors disagreed with this statement, and later planned to document the problem on a trip-by-trip basis.) Claytor said that stocking is based on a printout of passenger loadings, plus 25% extra. (He did not clarify what this system assumes that the average passenger will purchase.)

OTHER COMMENTS: Amtrak will begin to take over the train and engine crews outside the NE Corridor starting this year. He couldn't reveal where yet, but he said Amtrak will start one by one with the simplest areas to tackle.

The Amtrak staff "still has too many people."

The New York City "westside connection" between Grand Central and Penn Station is still years away.

New service decisions will consider induced traffic and the potential of connections. Amtrak will consider any new service that will meet short-term avoidable costs--that will improve the cost-to-revenue ratio.

Claytor is familiar with Prof. Sheck's "Amtrak 90" book, and he says the plan will not work because the volume of business is not there.

★ ★ ★

Amtrak's Vice President-Marketing, Robert Gall, was the speaker at the NARP Board's luncheon on Apr 23.

Mr. Gall told the NARP people that marketing is more than advertising and promotion. It involves 1) the total environment; 2) how to fit profit and loss concerns; and 3) how to maximize the situation.

He admitted that Amtrak continually misses forecasts due to the unstable economy. The unemployment rate and disposable income are two critical factors of the economy for Amtrak. The total travel market was down an estimated 14% from 1981 to 1982--a deep hole, he said. Overall pleasure travel was down 22%. The competitive environment of air wars hurts. A flurry of low pricing and bargain fares are difficult to compete with. You can expect the air fare flurries to continue on a hit and miss basis. People's Express is the most competitive air carrier, and is likely to continue so.

Advertising is the most significant part, but not the whole, of the marketing effort. One must have staff and follow-thru, as with support for travel agents. A major effort is to close the "perception gap"--the situation where people don't know how good Amtrak is. Closing this gap is a first stop; then Amtrak must give people a reason for taking the train. Then, get into scheduling, pricing, convenience, comfort, etc. He referred to a "distinctive competency" or a unique attribute that should be pushed in selling.

Gall said that 40 to 50% of advertising is spent on a national message to lay a foundation. The actual split will vary based on need. The balance of the advertising budget is for local or specific strategies--special markets, travel agent support, military and international traffic, etc. This includes various specific current or new service promotions. Gall referred to forthcoming marketing/advertising efforts for the Chicago and Empire Services--hub market strategy, with emphasis on advertising outside the major Chicago or New York area.

According to Gall, a good ad will 1) get attention; 2) deliver a sales message; 3) be consistent and/or continuous in the type of ad; and 4) give other consumer information. Amtrak keeps trying new approaches to test the market.

A Turboliner photograph used in Amtrak's current "All Aboard Amtrak" marketing campaign. Critics have chided Amtrak for not beginning the All Aboard America discount fares that later accompanied the ad campaign soon enough. The fares are now off, but tickets can be used thru the month of May.

Half of Amtrak's revenue growth is coming from increasing yield (per passenger) and not just from volume. Gall is strong on yield. Segment "inhibitors" are needed from time to time to maintain the yield. An example he gave is blocking out space from Washington to Richmond to favor longer distance Florida travelers. Amtrak passenger miles are down, but revenue is up. This shows better revenue/cost ratio, but not volume growth. Amtrak must work for both. He feels the revenue/cost ratio is the key because it shows Amtrak is gaining credibility in the concern over costs.

In response to questions, Gall said that Amtrak has too many insignificant stations where patronage doesn't cover costs--a "bottomless pit" for capital costs. But he admitted that Amtrak doesn't have an overall concept yet regarding stations.

Travel agents bring in 25% of all sales, and up to 60% of sales on some long distance routes. The Amtrak program to give travel agents training trips is to educate new agents into becoming big sellers. Amtrak will soon be providing automated access to travel agents thru three major airline reservation systems, to give agents more instant access.

To a question about corridors, Gall said that Amtrak is still uncertain what is the right mix of equipment and services on corridors. An example is that Amtrak doesn't know yet where to best use the dinettes.

Effectiveness of marketing campaigns: Amtrak does many things, but some efforts get lost because of their smallness or limited budgets. Gall indicated that the Superliner ad campaign (the large newspaper ads) was not wholly effective.

One-way markets: Amtrak recognizes the value of one-way traffic; that many would like to go one way by air. Amtrak is currently talking with airlines, but nothing can be announced yet.

Student fares? Many special fares have dropped out over the years because the basic discount fares have replaced them. Gall called the Annual Travel Card (used by the Swedish system) an interesting plan, but made no commitment about it.

Gall said we could expect the return of "capacity control" discounts later this year.

In response to a question about the perilous status of the SPIRIT OF CALIFORNIA, Gall said that Amtrak was looking at things to do to help the train, but he could not divulge them at this time.

★ THE END OF THE FRIDAY-ONLY TIDEWATER ★

by Adron Hall

The last Friday-only TIDEWATER, Amtrak train 96, departed Newport News, Virginia on Apr 22 with little fanfare. The train was begun as an experiment with the fall 1982 timetable change. Amtrak had wanted to provide a northbound departure to the several large Northeastern metropolitan areas for service personnel (mostly Navy) located in the greater Norfolk area. They could travel home for the weekend and return on Sunday afternoon on the regular schedule of the COLONIAL.

One TV station (WAVY) reporter and camera crew showed up to see the 30 passengers depart. After speaking to the reporter briefly, I learned that he was unaware of the train's past. I then told him (now in interview before camera) of the intent of the Friday departure, but that it had existed in almost complete obscurity. There was the usual lack of advertising; in fact, the train wasn't even in Amtrak's timetable. A note below the COLONIAL/TIDEWATER timetable indicated the TIDEWATER's departure was on Sunday afternoon, but no mention of Friday. Then there's the problem of transportation from Norfolk (world's largest Navy base) to Newport News. When Amtrak operated a dome on its JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY from Newport News westbound to Charlottesville and Cincinnati, I had urged them to provide a dedicated bus connection to the Navy bases in Norfolk. Today, ten years later, there's still no bus. On Friday afternoon there is a virtual exodus of military people from Norfolk to the Northeast. It's obvious if they knew of the TIDEWATER, or had transportation to connect to it, the train would be utilized by these travelers. However, they go instead by car, bus and plane.

On this Friday, the TIDEWATER departed with 30 passengers from the Newport News station (three miles from downtown, but conveniently located with good access). There wasn't one single sailor aboard. At Lee Hall one passenger boarded, and in Williamsburg 20 more entrained. In Richmond the passenger count swelled by ten as five got off and 15 on (probably small because of the PALMETTO's departure north one hour earlier).

So service was provided to 65 passengers for this segment (Newport News to Washington) of an unknown train, in this travel off-season. I wonder how they found out about it. The next Friday afternoon they would have to drive, fly or take a bus.

* * *

Consist of the last train 96: engine 271; cars 21140, 20018.

THE CRESCENT'S DINER is going thru to New Orleans once again with the Apr 24 timetable change. So breakfast will be served southbound almost to Birmingham, where the diner crew will detrain. Northbound, dinner will commence before

(continued on page 18)

★ AFTER CONCLUDING 60-DAY PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD, AMTRAK DECIDES TO PROCEED WITH AUTO-FERRY SERVICE; FALL STARTUP PLANNED

The following is the text of a press release from Amtrak dated April 20, concerning the planned auto-ferry service:

"After reviewing the public response to Amtrak's proposed auto-ferry service, the company's Board of Directors has authorized management to proceed with plans to begin the service between the Washington DC area and Florida this fall.

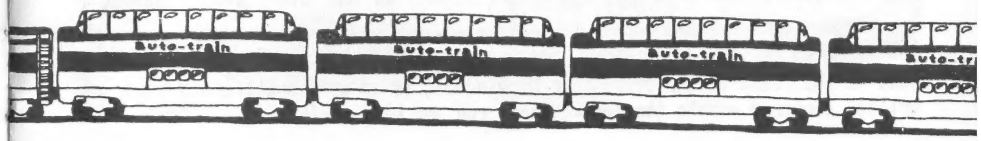
More than 1500 letters and recorded comments were received by Amtrak during a 60-day public comment period which began Feb 16, 1983 and ended Apr 16, 1983. Ninety-nine percent of all comments received favored the proposed service and one percent opposed it. In addition to the public comments, Amtrak currently has a reservation waiting list of more than 400 persons who wish to confirm reservations on the new train as soon as a startup date and other details have been decided.

The auto-ferry service will combine modern passenger coaches, sleeping cars, food service cars, and auto carriers in one train. It will operate on an overnight schedule three times a week during off-peak periods and daily during the peak seasons. Each train will accommodate approximately 530 passengers along with 200 automobiles.

In a report to its Board, Amtrak management noted that of all comments received, 43 percent were from persons who noted that they had used Auto-Train in the past. This high percentage of responses from previous users demonstrates a solid market interest for the service and a high degree of customer satisfaction with the service previously offered by Auto-Train.

Responses were received from all regions of the United States, tho, predictably, more than 90 percent of the comments were from Florida and the Northeast.

Public comments also included several suggestions for improving the service. The greatest interest focused on the location of the terminals. Suggestions for terminal locations included various New England points, upper New York State, New York City, New Jersey, Pittsburgh, Philadelphia, central Ohio, and points north of Baltimore. For the southern terminal, Jacksonville, Orlando and Miami were suggested. Amtrak has not yet made a final decision on terminal locations.

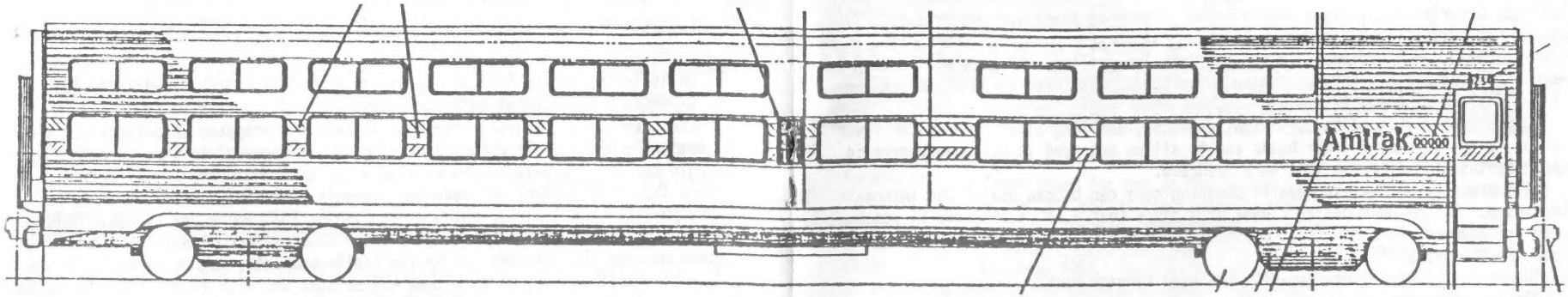


Sixteen responses (1%) opposing the proposed auto-ferry service included statements that the proposal is a waste of taxpayers' money, that there are already enough Amtrak trains to Florida, and that Amtrak should concentrate its efforts on its existing national system.

Amtrak expects the new service to make a profit, thus reducing the need for Federal operating grants for other Amtrak services. The auto-ferry service is not expected to have a negative impact on Amtrak's two other Florida trains, the SILVER METEOR and SILVER STAR, which frequently sell out during peak travel periods.

All persons who commented on the auto-ferry service will receive additional information about schedules, fares and on-board service as it becomes available."

Amtrak's New Single Level Car Designs



Amtrak on April 20 released the following press release telling of its coming program to build prototypes of a new single-level car design:

"Amtrak's Board of Directors today approved the construction and testing of prototypes for a new generation of single-level intercity railroad passenger cars.

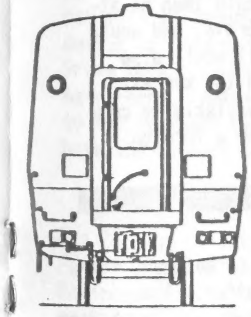
"Original design work for the cars, begun in June, 1982, is nearing completion. The prototypes, two sleeping cars and one dining car, will be placed in revenue service to test their customer acceptance and mechanical reliability. The cars are expected to be ready for testing late in 1985, and revenue testing and design concept evaluation would then proceed for a period of approximately two years. During that test period, any design deficiencies or unsuccessful passenger amenity concepts would be modified appropriately before more cars are produced.

"Amtrak is looking to the prototypes as the potential replacements for the older single-level Heritage Fleet cars in Amtrak's fleet when they are retired from revenue service in the late 1980's and early 1990's. The prototype program is the first step toward developing a new generation of highly efficient, comfortable single-level passenger cars, and it will enable Amtrak to develop a design and then evaluate it in revenue service.

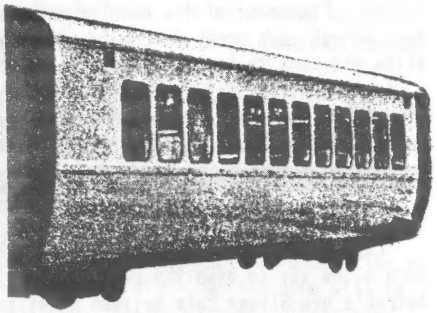
The new prototypes will be designed so that the same car shells may be used for both the sleeper and diner configurations as well as for future coach, lounge, and baggage dormitory cars. The cars will be entirely compatible with Amtrak's all-electric passenger car fleet.

The design and engineering work for the cars is being carried out by Amtrak's Equipment Engineering staff and a group of rail-experienced contract engineers, designers and draftsmen. Mockups of key car elements and systems will be made prior to construction. The car shells will be purchased from a railroad car builder, tested for structural strength, and shipped to Amtrak's Beech Grove, Indiana, maintenance facility for assembly.

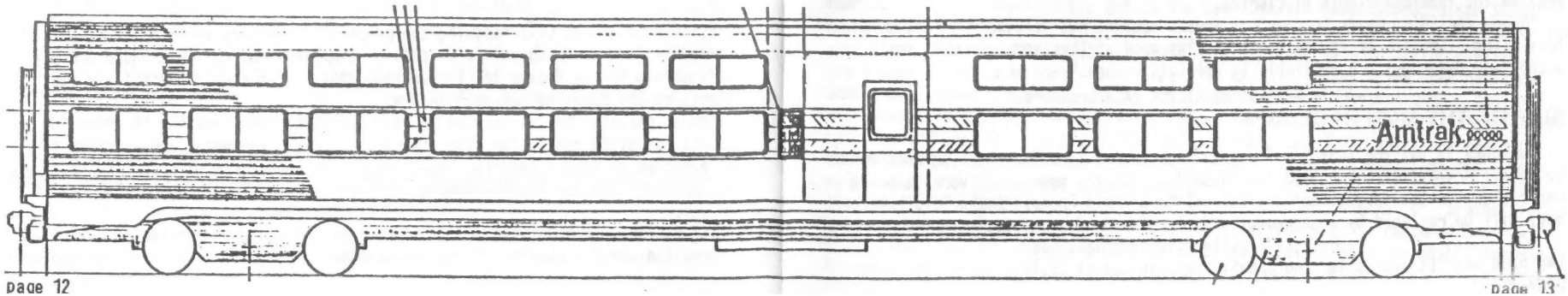
The appearance of the prototypes will be distinguished by their double row of windows, the upper, smaller windows providing a view for passengers in upper berths on the sleeping car version of the new cars, as well as providing a spacious, open environment in the dining cars."



The shape of the cars in cross-section (left) is said by Amtrak to resemble slightly the LRC coach (shown at right).



The sleeping car design is shown above, and the diner below. On the car exteriors, just to the right of the sixth pair of windows, is an air-conditioning fresh air grille, centered within the longitudinal red and blue stripes.



RTN has also learned that the cars will have all mechanical equipment located on their undersides. Therefore, the heat and air conditioning ducts will be located along the baseboards and just below the windows. This change means that no mechanicals will be located overhead in the cars. Current equipment such as Amfleet, Superliner, Heritage have a large portion of their various mechanicals located in the ceilings (including plumbing, evaporator pans, air ducts, etc.). When the mechanical equipment is removed from the ceiling, the cars will have much higher ceilings. This will give a feeling of roominess and will enable some of the following things to happen:

*Upper berths will be raised slightly higher, enabling passengers in the lower berths to avoid bumping their heads and to sit up and read in bed; passengers in upper berths will likewise have more headroom.

*All space above the hallways in sleeping cars can become useful and interesting space. Deluxe bedrooms will have that space (81" x 24" x 24") and it can be used for luggage storage or even possibly a berth. Economy bedrooms can use that space as storage (40" x 24" x 24").

*Coaches will have large capacity overhead luggage racks.

*Diners, sleepers and lounges will have the second band of windows in the cars located about where the luggage racks are in the coaches.

The sleeping cars will have 14 economy rooms, two deluxe bedrooms and one handicapped room. All rooms have toilets and washing facilities.

The dining car layout is said to be almost identical to the conventional (Heritage Fleet) diner.

The layout for the lounge cars is probably still undecided. The cafeteria design used in the Heritage cars will probably not be used, since Amtrak President Claytor is said not to be favorable to that design.

Cars will be designed and assembled in a modular fashion. A builder will produce the car shell with trucks and mechanical equipment. The basic design unit in the cars is 81 inches. Subcontractors will produce the appropriate units. For example, a subcontractor will manufacture a deluxe bedroom, which would be rolled into the car shell and bolted into place. Mechanicals would then be attached. Placement of the modular units would be done at Beech Grove, and would save Amtrak much money in construction costs, it is believed. It would also allow the cars to be easily reconfigured if there are changes in the market.

In the United States, the Budd Company would presumably be available to construct the car shells. An Amtrak spokesman was uncertain whether a foreign car builder could be used for construction of the cars.

QUOTES OF THE WEEK***

"Explore Florida from Miami to Tampa Bay and exciting places in between. Here's the way to make the most of everything Florida's got to offer. Aboard Amtrak's new Silver Palm between Miami and Tampa, you just sit back and feast your eyes on the fabulous sights of Florida.

"Deep, reclining seats in spacious modern coaches put all the fun back into travelling. Stretch or stroll about, as the mood strikes you. Snacks, sandwiches and beverages are available in our Cafe Lounge."

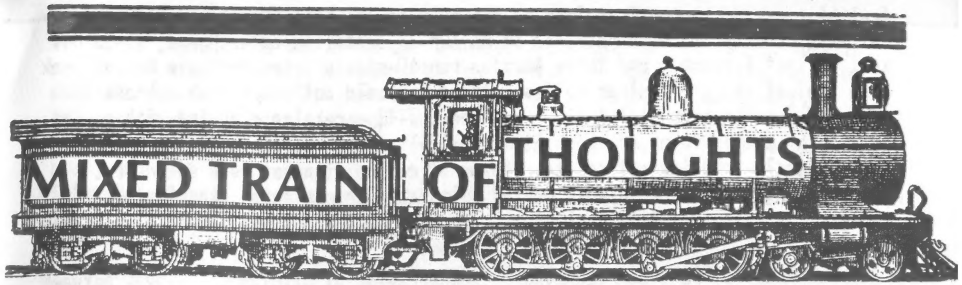
--From new Amtrak SILVER PALM brochure.

SLIP OF THE MONTH CLUB***

"January 17 was the last day for potential contractors for the Singapore metro to submit prequalification bids for Phase 1... At the moment all work is being undertaken for the Provisional Provisional Mass Rapid Transit Authority, but this body will be replaced by a permanent organisation in due course."

--Railway Gazette International, Feb.

(We hope so. It sounds far too provisional the way it is.)



MORE DOME CARS are being rebuilt at Amtrak's Beech Grove shops and converted to electric head-end power for use on the Amtrak system. Dome coach 9486 went to Beech Grove around the end of April, leaving Los Angeles, where the car was in storage, on the rear of train 4, the SOUTHWEST LIMITED, on Apr 26. Consist of train 4 was: engines 254, 244; cars 1153, 1132, 39921, 34034, 39958, 39975, 38032, 32048, dead dome 9486. This is another in the series of dome coaches such as are being used on the CAPITOL LIMITED. The latter train got a third dome when car 9403 left Chicago on May 4 on train 440. Amtrak said that by about May 12 there would be a dome consistently in each of the three trainsets of the CAPITOL. Amtrak has been making some small modifications in them as they reach Washington, such as blanking out the ashtrays in the seats, since no smoking is allowed in the domes. Unfortunately, the refurbished domes have been outfitted with high-backed Amfleet-type seats which severely restrict forward vision for passengers. The Amfleet seats were installed so that they could be turned when the train is reversed, without having to turn the entire car.....

AMTRAK DOME 9486 was last used on the COAST STARLIGHT in Jan, 1981, and it was put into storage in Los Angeles on Jan 12, 1981 because of a wheel problem. While in storage there it was vandalized. Among other things, the sinks were smashed, the copper plumbing ripped out, the window shades removed, and the luggage racks partially dismantled. Car 9486 is former Northern Pacific dome coach 559. The car will be renumbered when it emerges from Beech Grove. In other dome news, Amtrak is reported to be rebuilding three ex-Great Northern Great Domes at Beech Grove (see also page 7.) These full-length dome lounges are to be used on the Auto-Ferry. Amtrak had six of these cars, numbered 9360-9365. Car 9363 was sold to the Southern Pacific for cannibalizing, as reported in RTN 238. We do not have the numbers of the three cars that are at Beech Grove (or soon to be there)...

★ ★ ★

GREAT AMERICAN RAIL ROADSHOW was held at Washington Union Station on Apr 23 and 24, and it attracted 70,000 people. Amtrak formerly called such events its Family Days, but now they are done in conjunction with the American Association of Railroads, so other railroads are involved in the exhibits (the next one will be in Denver on June 11). A large amount of equipment was on display. There were four Superliners (which rarely get to the East Coast): coach 34040, diner 38018, lounge 33022, and sleeper 32053; plus Hi-level coach-dorm 39933. (These latter five cars all arrived in Washington deadheading on the rear of the CAPITOL LIMITED.) There were three Turbo cars: power car, club car and coach; there were Heritage dome coach, diner and slumbercoach; there were Amfleet I 60-seat coach, Amdinette and 33-seat Amclub; all renovated for Metroliner service; there were Amtrak exhibit cars 10090 "Silver Chest", 10091 "Silver Peak", and 10092 "Southern Belle"; there two training cars--10501 and 10502; a Heritage 10/6 sleeper; an AEM-7 locomotive; an F-40 locomotive; a Maryland DOT locomotive and coach; Amtrak instruction car 10505 (ex-UP coach equipped with movie screen); Washington Terminal locomotive and tie tamper; New Jersey DOT GG-1 locomotive 4877 in restored original Tuscan red paint and striping; Central of Georgia office car "Savannah"; Amfleet II coach and lounge; Amtrak track geometry car; C&O track geometry car; and many

freight cars and locomotives from as far away as the Maine Central. A 10-car Amtrak excursion train, consisting of an AEM-7 locomotive on each end, seven 84-seat Amfleet I coaches and three Amcafes ran 40-minute trips to Bowie MD and back at a nominal charge. Amtrak said all the trips sold out completely. Track 13 was used for the excursion train, and tracks 7-12 were also occupied with equipment. The entire lobby of the station was filled with railroadiana booths, and Amtrak itself sold items from its catalog of railroadiana at reduced prices. The building was decorated with potted palms and other plants. The turnout was spectacular, despite rainy weather.....

★ ★ ★

THE YANKEE CLIPPER, Corridor train 170, derailed at Clinton CT, midway between New Haven and New London at 2:30pm on Apr 28. The train, traveling at 75mph in an 85mph zone, derailed the last four cars, with the last three cars breaking loose from the train and the first of those three coming to rest hanging precariously from a railroad bridge spanning state highway 81. A woman and her 4-year old daughter were driving under the bridge just as the derailment occurred, and their car was pelted with heavy debris but they escaped serious injury. A city patrolman who had driven under just ahead of them led them to safety. Twelve people on the train were reported with relatively minor injuries, of the 199 aboard. Fortunately, few passengers were in the rear cars; one of them was empty because of a malfunctioning air conditioner. The cause of the accident was not immediately known, but evidently it was a mechanical problem with a car or with the track. The track was closed for 13 hours, and passengers were bused between trains in New Haven and New London. Train 67, the NIGHT OWL, was detoured via Springfield with 85mins delay, and missed stops were covered by buses. The derailed cars on train 170 were 21141, 21011 (hanging over highway--most injuries in this car), 21211 and 21259. The underailed portion of the train continued on to Boston after an hour's delay.....

★ ★ ★

COAST STARLIGHT FIRE of Jun 23, 1982 had its investigation completed and a report by the National Transportation Safety Board made public on Apr 19. The board concluded that the exact details of the fire's origin could not be determined, but it was probably due to careless smoking. The board blamed the car attendant and the conductor for lack of action that might have saved the lives of the two passengers who perished in the fire. The board blamed the lack of training of the crew and their inaction. A fire extinguisher should have been used at once, passengers alerted, and the ventilation system turned off. None of these things was done, the board noted. It recommended that Amtrak put in a smoke detection system that turns off the ventilation system when activated, and that windows be made easier to escape thru. Amtrak Superliner sleepers now carry posted emergency instructions in each room.....

WE TOLD YOU SO DEPARTMENT: The airlines are starting to take offense at the All Aboard Amtrak ad campaign which tries to put down airplanes. The Air Transport Association, reports USA Today (Apr 12), complained that "It's a bit disquieting that Amtrak is diverting millions it receives in taxpayer dollars for an ad campaign aimed at the airlines, which pay for their own advertising." This could lead to the airlines lobbying against Amtrak funding in Congress.....

TRAINS RUNNING OUT of food and drink items is a complaint we're hearing more and more. We were warned about this problem on the SAN FRANCISCO ZEPHYR before our early-April trip, but we didn't experience any major problem. However, we have a report from train 5, the CALIFORNIA ZEPHYR which left Chicago Apr 24 (the "inaugural run"). By the last dinner period, approaching Ogden, the train had run out of every single dinner entree except turkey. There was also no chocolate ice cream--only melting vanilla ice cream. In another example, on the CAPITOL LIMITED out of Washington on Apr 23 the Amdinette ran out of all hot meals by 7:30pm. The train is stocked only in Washington, so presumably the next eastbound run had none either.....

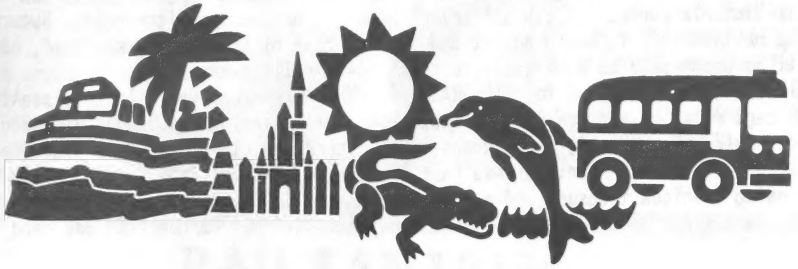
THE READER'S DIGEST published a welcome article on transportation funding in its April issue. "We can solve the transportation puzzle", by Ted J. Rakstis, points out that "America's transportation system is headed for collapse." He supports Amtrak funding ("Continued federal support of Amtrak is necessary, if only because Amtrak's revival is spurring private investment in passenger railroads.") He concludes with a quote from Amtrak's Clark Tyler: "What we need now are intermodal transportation centers. Every train station should have a connection with interstate buses, mass transit and airport limousines. When we make it convenient for people to use whatever means of travel is most suitable, all our systems will work together".....

SUPERLINER RIDING QUALITY came to our attention on our April trip to Denver. The old advice to choose a bedroom or seat in the middle of the car, not over the wheels, may no longer be true. We found a Superliner bedroom over the wheels to be smoother riding than one in the car center. Further discussion suggested that the reason may be flexing of the car body, so that when a bump is encountered (and there are a lot of them on the Southern Pacific) the middle of the car oscillates more than the ends do--much as a string vibrates more at the center if you hold both its ends and jerk them. Evidently this happens because the car bodies are not as stiff as they used to make them.....

★ ★ ★

DINING CAR MENUS changed on Amtrak on Apr 24. Breakfast is improved in that you now have a choice of ways your eggs are cooked (not just greasy scrambled). On the dinner menus steak replaced prime rib and chicken Kiev replaced barbecued chicken. But one reader complains that short ribs and lasagne are both gone from the menu, and he felt they were popular. Seafood, spaghetti and turkey are available. Incidentally, newspapers are now given to sleeping car patrons. When we boarded train 5 in Ogden on Apr 11, there was a fresh Ogden newspaper on the floor of our room.....

THE SILVER PALM, the Miami-Tampa train, now has a handsome brochure which includes train and connecting bus schedules. The folder, printed in five colors, has handsome graphics (some shown below) and silver palms decorating it. (We could use something like that for the SPIRIT OF CALIFORNIA).....



A DESTRUCTIVE EARTHQUAKE of 6.5 Richter magnitude occurred near Coalinga CA at 4:42pm on May 2. The SAN JOAQUIN, train 709, was at Hanford at the time, not far from the epicenter of the quake. The train was delayed 2hrs, 6mins while tracks were inspected. Train 710 was delayed 32mins. The COAST STARLIGHT, train 14, was between San Luis Obispo and Salinas, also not terribly far from the epicenter. It was delayed 1hr, 26mins. San Francisco peninsula commute trains were operated on slow orders for about an hour. We didn't feel the quake in Berkeley...

SPIRIT OF CALIFORNIA got a boost in April when the state Senate Transportation Committee indicated it wants it continued. However, the committee did not provide money in the budget for it. Observers give it a 50-50 chance of survival now.....

THE REAL PEOPLE filming train for the TV program is to run an hour behind the LAKE SHORE LIMITED that leaves Chicago on May 23.....

THE SILVER STAR, train 81 of Apr 24, derailed its lounge car #3113, the 11th car of the train, inside the First Street Tunnel at Washington Terminal. The car rerailed itself, however, and the train proceeded to Alexandria, where the car was examined and removed from the train. A broken brake hub was found. Cause of the derailment was said to be worn switch points on #23 switch.....

EASTBOUND TIME SLOTS of the BROADWAY and LAKE SHORE might be reversed at the October timetable change, reports Kevin Gregoire.....

★ ★ ★

RIO GRANDE ZEPHYR cars going to Amtrak are: domes 1106 "Silver Colt", 1107 "Silver Mustang", and 1108 "Silver Pony"; flattop coaches 1120 "Silver Aspen" and 1121 "Silver Pine"; and diner 1115 "Silver Banquet". On writing of the RGZ's last run, the Casper, Wyoming Star-Tribune called the train a "tarnished silver dinosaur".....

THE SOUTHERN PACIFIC on Apr 14 announced that it was ceasing operations on the storm-ravaged portion of the Northwestern Pacific between Willits and Eureka CA, and will seek ICC permission to abandon it. It said it will work closely with anyone who wants to take it over. Eureka officials and businessmen were shocked. A Nevada City company called Suntrain made overtures in late April to obtain the line as far south as San Rafael to run tourist passenger trains.....

THE SANTA FE'S Williams to Grand Canyon AZ line will be torn up, as the railway received no firm bids on it by the Mar 31 deadline.....

PASSENGER MILES/TRAIN MILE is out as a criterion for route retention in the legislation Congress is now working on for Amtrak. In its place is avoidable loss per passenger mile favored by Amtrak President Graham Claytor.....

CONRAIL'S SHELBYVILLE LINE is saved for several years, as CR has signed an agreement with shippers that will retain the line.....

News in this issue is updated thru May 5, 1983.

EDITORIAL: LAST OF THE GREAT ROMANTICS?

A "romantic" was what a shipping official called rail supporter Glenn Lee in 1974 when Glenn was lobbying for the return of the "Princess Marguerite" to the Seattle-Victoria route. It was a "forlorn hope", a newspaper editor said. But now the revived ship is being advertised as "The last of the great romantics", now that it is again seen as a valuable tourist asset to its owners.

Will the same be true of the RIO GRANDE ZEPHYR? Glenn Lee would like to see the ZEPHYR cars retained and run as a Colorado-only train serving the Denver-Glenwood Springs route. We hope his dream comes true. There are others who feel likewise. Jon Busch in the Rocky Mountain News (Apr 25) argued that the ZEPHYR is "capable of becoming a unique treasure and a priceless asset to the state and ski industry." It will take a lot of work and planning. They thought the "Marguerite" was dead too.

CRESCENT'S DINER (continued from page 10)

Atlanta, not at 8:30pm when the diner was attached at Atlanta. Train 19 from Washington on Apr 23 carried a deadhead diner to New Orleans, and a deadhead slumbercoach to Atlanta to commence the new services for northbound trains on Apr 24 and 25.

Carl Loucks
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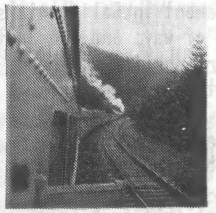
MOVING?



Be sure to send RTN your change of address as early as possible. Don't rely on the Postal Service to forward your mail!

CARS & CONSISTS

*EMPIRE BUILDER, train 7, Milwaukee Apr 5: engines 297, 362; cars 39907, 34051, 34096, 38030, 33008, 31033, 34054, 32012, 32003.

*COAST STARLIGHT, train 11, Seattle Apr 7: engines 204, 287; cars 1216, 39912, 31029, 34044, 34602, 39962, 33005, 33038, 32031, 32000.

*SAN DIEGAN, train 573, San Diego Apr 12: engine 237; cars 21887, 21267, 20036, 21139, 21242, 21251, 1376.

*SAN FRANCISCO ZEPHYR, train 6, lv Ogden Apr 15: engines 366, 310; cars 1144, 1229, 39909, 32022, 38024, 33024, 34026, 31044, 34066, 32002, 34080, 32067.

*JEFFERSONIAN, train 133, Washington Apr 24: engine 931 (AEM-7); cars 21225, 20126, 21010, 21096, 21081.

CRESCENT: consist of derailed train 20 near Rockfish VA on Apr 3 (see last issue): engines 260, 325; cars 1178, 1611, 2431 "Pacific Forum", 4020, 4612, 4019, 4711, 3119, 8517, 4615, 4637, 4604, 2883. *"Pacific Forum" was also in the wreck of train 19 at Moundsville AL on Oct 6, 1982. Train 19, Hattiesburg MS Apr 7: engine 372; cars 1221, 1627, 2443, 2932, 4013, 4606, 4742, 4609, 3122.

*PIONEER, train 26, Ogden Apr 8: engine 215; cars 33016, 31005, 34021, 32002.

*DESERT WIND, train 36, Ogden Apr 8: engines 233, 242; cars 1211, 20220, 39917, 31026, 34014, 32068.

RAIL FANTRIPS

May 14: "Old 25" Runs Again. McCloud to Mt. Shasta 32-mile roundtrip. Donation $20. Mt. Shasta Excursion Club, PO Box 535, Mt. Shasta CA 96067. Send SASE. 2 ex-SHASTA DAYLIGHT coaches, bar-lounge car, 2 open gondola cars.

May 21 or May 22: "Memphis Special." SR steam roundtrip Memphis-Iuka MS, 10 hrs. A/C & open-window cars, taping car, commissary car, 1st class Pullmans & diner. charity benefit. $37. Friends of LeBonheur, 4515 Poplar Ave, Suite 130, Memphis TN 38117. (901) 761-0520. $4 box lunch available at Iuka.

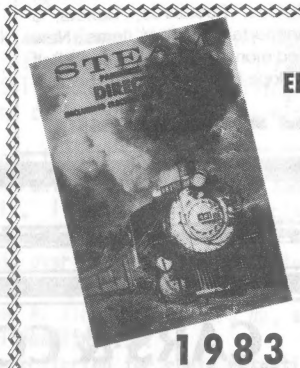
Jun 18: Pittsburgh-Altoona PA RT via fabulous Horseshoe Curve. Amfleet equipment. Adult $44, child $42. Info: Pittsburgh Chap, NRHS, PO Box 822, Pittsburgh PA 15230. Send SASE. Co-host: Pittsburgh Transportation Museum Society.

One Rail Fantrips listing is free. Send full info to: RAIL TRAVEL NEWS, Fantrips Dept, PO Box 9007, Berkeley CA 94709. When responding to listing, include SASE.

BOOKS

★The Northwestern Pacific Railroad is now a focus of attention. There is a considerable movement in California's Marin County to install a rail transit system on its right of way; and the Southern Pacific is halting freight operations on the northern portion of the railroad. At this time, along comes a book to remind us of the commuter railroad past of the NWP. ELECTRIC RAILWAY PIONEER, subtitled Commuting on the Northwestern Pacific, 1903-1941, by Harre Demoro, has just been published by Interurban Press (Box 6444, Glendale CA 91205). Early in this century the NWP pioneered electric suburban service for Marin Co. commuters. The line introduced block signal and power system designs that made modern rapid transit (including BART) possible. But the trains were finally done in by the opening of the Golden Gate Bridge in 1939. This fascinating book tells and shows us all about the operation. 136 pages 8½x11 hardbound, $24.95 (plus $1.10 by mail).

★On a topic related to the book above, a new edition of THE CROOK-EDEST RAILROAD IN THE WORLD (California's Mt. Tamalpais & Muir Woods Railroad) is just out from the same publisher. This 132-p hardbound 8½x11 book by Ted Wurm and Al Graves has twice the content of the original (out of print) volume. The story of this strange railroad with its odd gravity cars seems almost like a fairy tale. An enjoyable book. ($24.95) (If ordered by mail, add $1.10 postage & handling; Californians add tax.) 216 photos.



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Middletown, New York 10940

IN MEMORIAM

William Ronald Jeffrey, 64, formerly of British Rail, late of Red Deer, Alberta, deceased in a VIA Rail wreck near Carstairs, Alberta, on March 23rd; with his son Stephen, 31, friend Heidi Kierski-Furth, 42; and CP Rail engineer Stewart A. Tombling, 58, and passenger Stanley Edward Charbet, 38. R.I.P. (Transport 2000).

RTN ADVERTISING RATES: Express Ads cost just $1.00 per line of 80 spaces. Display ads are only $1.25 per square inch. Send your order to: RAIL TRAVEL NEWS, Box 9007, Berkeley CA 94709.

EXPRESS ADS

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DINING CAR CHINA, glasses, silver, cloth. Timetables, guides, stationery, rules, metal & Pullman items, annual reports. Many railroads. Long 37¢ stamped envelope brings list. J. McClellan, 1752 S. Wichita, Wichita, KS 67213. Will buy items.

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SEE OUR RAILROADIANA items, china, glasses, silver, linens, timetables, rules, etc. at Railroadiana Show, Howard Johnsons, 3839 S. Topeka, Topeka KS April 23; Lone Star RRiana Show, Will Rogers Mem. Center, Ft. Worth TX May 1; Eighth Annual RRiana Show, Miller Park Pavilion, Bloomington IL May 15; Mile High Railfair, Jefferson County Fairgrounds, Golden CO, adjoining Denver, July 16, 17. Jim and Elaine McClellan, 1752 S. Wichita, Wichita, KS 67213.

June 25 and July 23, 1983. The "Wisconsin Dells Hiawatha". Special 1-day excursion trains chartered by the 20th Century RR Club to the fabulous Wisconsin Dells area over the Milwaukee Road. Note there are two departures of this popular excursion whose consist will include Amfleet coach and cafe service and a first class section featuring domes, diner and observation car. For complete details send a long SASE to: 20th Century RR Club, Dept R, Box A-3258, Chicago IL 60690 or call the 24-hour 20th Century Excursion Hotline at (312) 846-3600.

WANTED: 1 copy of FROM ZEPHYR TO AMTRAK (Prototype Publs) & ZEPHYRS CHIEFS AND OTHER ORPHANS (RPC Publs). R. Pee Jr, 5280 New London Trace, Atlanta GA 30327.

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Fantastic clear plastic public timetable slip covers. Finest quality. Only $8.99 per 100, 500 for $39. 1000 for $60. Also 55 timetables for only $13, a great bargain. Tom Coval, 21 E. Robin Road, Holland PA 18966.

Frisco, Santa Fe; Missouri, Northern, Southern, Union and Western Pacific uniform button blazer sets, 2 large, 6 small, $4.95 per set. Joseph Lajoie, Box 3, Methuen, Mass. 01844. See us at Railfair, July 16 & 17, 1983 in Denver. For further information write: NRHS, Box 5181 Terminal Annex, Denver CO 80217.

INDIA! PALACE ON WHEELS--Join an 18-day tour of India aboard elegantly restored Maharajas private rail cars. Deluxe tour and unique itinerary--November 16-December 3, 1983. For further information call or write WORLD CLASS TRAVEL INC, 1216 Sycamore St, Cincinnati OH 45210. (513) 421-8000.

"ISSUES IN AMERICAN RAIL TRAVEL", RTN's little book on important problems with America's rail passenger revival, is almost ready for publication. Price will be $4.50, which includes relevant tax & postage. Full details will be given later in RTN. Rail Travel News, PO Box 9007, Berkeley CA 94709.

Saturday, June 11, 1983. "The Galesburg Zephyr". 20th Century RR Club and Amtrak present a special one-day Amfleet excursion train from Chicago Union Station to the "Railroad Days" Festival in Galesburg IL via BN, featuring BN-operated hump yard tours aboard bleacher-equipped gondolas, ATSF vs. BN track-laying contest, Amtrak equipment displays, RR history lectures, railroadiana displays, great ATSF and BN photo opportunities and more. For complete details send a long SASE to: 20th Century RR Club, Dept R, Box A-3258, Chicago IL 60690, or call the 24-hour 20th Century Excursion Hotline at (312) 846-3600.

AMTRAK RIDERSHIP FIGURES

MARCH 1983 FIGURES--SECOND COLUMN IS % INCREASE (DECREASE) OVER 1982

METROLINERS	89,438	(9.6)
NORTHEAST CORRIDOR CONVENTIONAL	545,178	8.7
NEW ENGLAND METROS	5,648	.0
NEW HAVEN-SPRINGFIELD	18,978	7.7
NEW YORK-PHILADELPHIA	376,613	113.1
PHILADELPHIA-HARRISBURG	78,117	4.3
NEW YORK-HARRISBURG	27,758	(4.8)
TOTAL NORTHEAST CORRIDOR	1,141,730	27.0
NEW YORK-ALBANY-NIAGARA FALLS	60,708	(2.4)
CHICAGO-ST.LOUIS	21,138	4.0
CHICAGO-MILWAUKEE	11,236	5.1
CHICAGO-DETROIT-TOLEDO	28,121	(11.5)
CHICAGO-CARBONDALE	13,310	(5.2)
CHICAGO-QUINCY	6,340	.9
LOS ANGELES-SAN DIEGO	96,559	.5
SEATTLE-PORTLAND	4,087	(23.9)
WASHINGTON-MARTINSBURG	18,523	(15.2)
OAKLAND-BAKERSFIELD	16,111	34.4
NEW YORK-MONTREAL	4,384	1.9
CHICAGO-PORT HURON-TORONTO	8,790	9.7
MINNEAPOLIS-DULUTH	2,735	(25.7)
CHICAGO-VALPARAISO	22,778	(10.6)
CHICAGO-INDIANAPOLIS	5,637	26.8
CHICAGO-KANSAS CITY	9,751	12.2
PHILADELPHIA-PITTSBURGH	5,233	(37.8)
PORTLAND-EUGENE		.0
LOS ANGELES-SACRAMENTO	4,633	(21.3)
MIAMI-TAMPA	5,228	.0
TOTAL SHORT DISTANCE	345,302	(1.2)
WASHINGTON-MONTREAL	8,412	(16.7)
NEW YORK-FLORIDA	75,365	10.1
CHICAGO-NEW YORK/WASHINGTON	19,622	(9.1)
CHICAGO-CIN-WAS-NEW YORK	5,561	(32.7)
CHICAGO-SEATTLE/PORTLAND	29,667	7.2
CHICAGO-OAKLAND	34,191	19.2
CHICAGO-LOS ANGELES	19,388	4.1
CHICAGO-NEW ORLEANS	15,688	(11.7)
CHICAGO-TEXAS	7,516	2.2
LOS ANGELES-NEW ORLEANS	6,766	11.8
LOS ANGELES-SEATTLE	29,989	(3.6)
CHICAGO-NEW YORK/BOSTON	28,248	7.8
BOSTON-NEWPORT NEWS	6,444	7.4
NEW YORK-SAVANNAH	10,701	(22.1)
SEATTLE-SALT LAKE CTY/CHICAGO	12,137	(2.1)
NEW YORK-NEW ORLEANS	22,002	(8.3)
LOS ANGELES-OGDEN-CHICAGO	9,886	5.9
TOTAL LONG DISTANCE	341,583	1.2
SPECIAL TRAINS	11,594	20.5
SYSTEM TOTAL	1,840,209	15.3

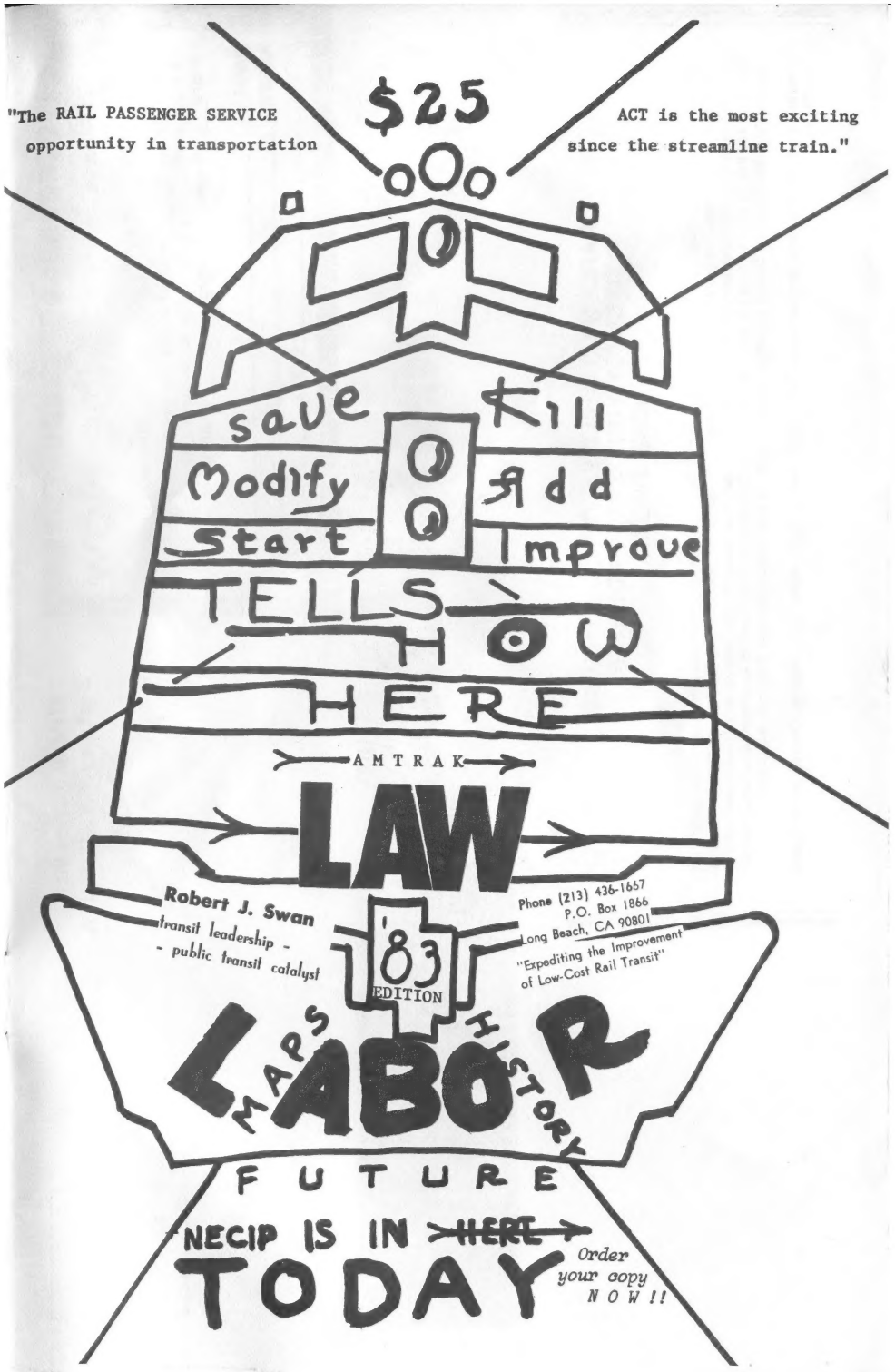
Here are the latest Amtrak ridership figures, for March, 1983. The February figures appeared in our last issue, no. 265.

For the first time in many months, Amtrak ridership showed an increase over the previous year's levels, with a 15.3% rise above March, 1982. This very substantial increase was undoubtedly due to the All Aboard America discount fares that began in February (see our comments last issue about this). Also contributing to the improvement in patronage is, one assumes, the improving economic picture in the U.S.

Long distance patronage was up overall 1.2% (compared with a 9.6% drop last month) and short distance was down 1.2% (compared with a 12% drop in February). NE Corridor ridership was up 27%, due mostly to a massive 113.1% increase in NY-Philadelphia patronage.

In the comparison month of March, 1982, overall system ridership was 1,595,433 while in March, 1983 the system total was 1,840,209.

The blank in the Portland-Eugene slot indicates the discontinuance of the WILLAMETTE VALLEY trains. The Miami-Tampa trains are too new to have a comparison figure from last year.



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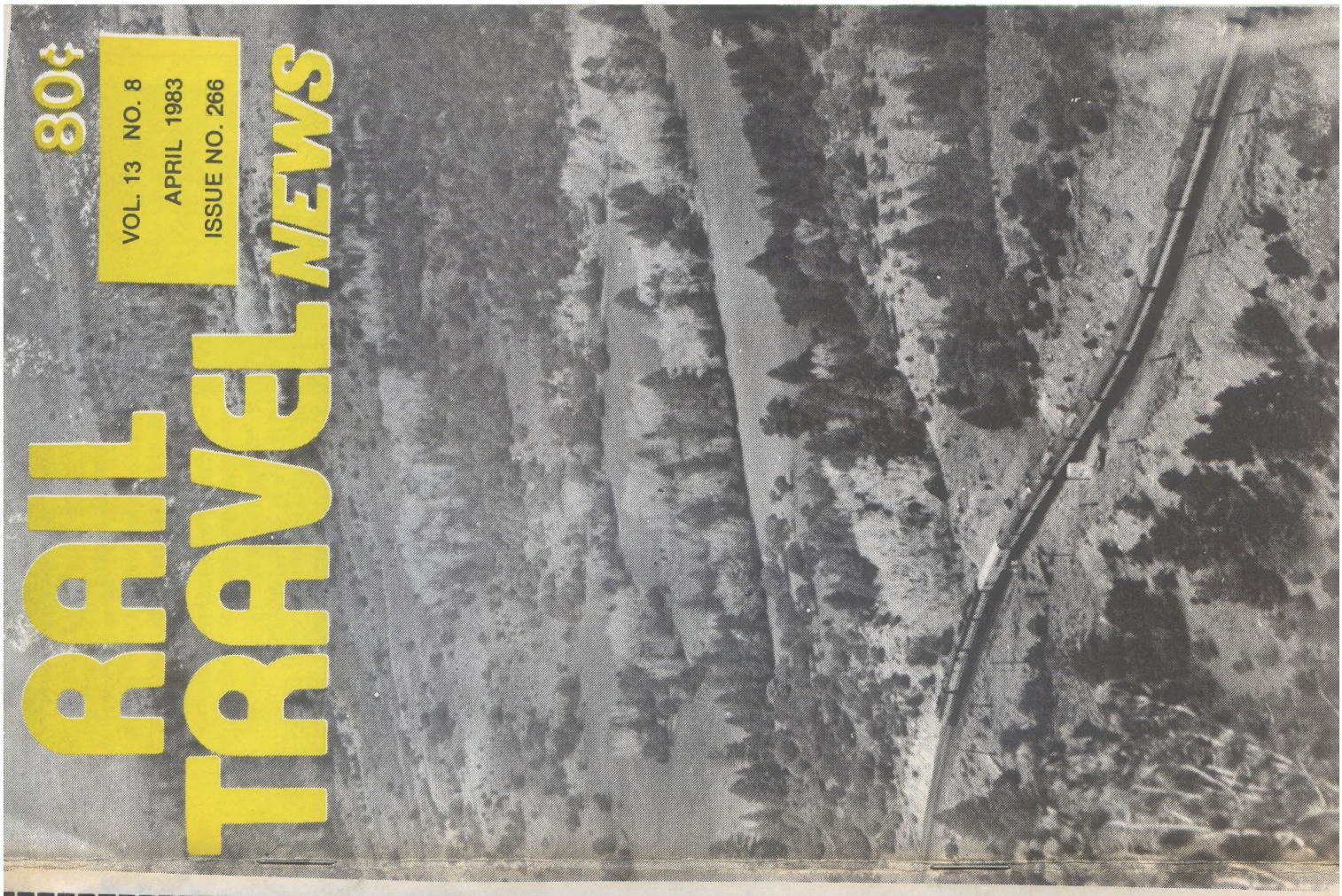

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PARDON US WHILE WE CHANGE TRACKS TO ENJOY YOUR STAY IN DENVER HERE'S HOW

Amtrak's Chicago-San Francisco train, the newly renamed California Zephyr, which was scheduled to inaugurate service over the Denver and Rio Grande Western Railroad between Denver/Salt Lake City on April 25, will temporarily detour over its former route through southern Wyoming. Massive earth slides brought on by heavy precipitation in eastern Utah have blocked the Rio Grande's right of way in the area of the Spanish Fork River. In order to adhere to our newly published schedule, the California Zephyr will depart Denver at 10:45 a.m. westbound and 9:20 p.m. eastbound.

Amtrak apoligizes for any inconvenience and would like to help make your stay in Denver an enjoyable experience.